

Vision ~ Arbor Heights Elementary School is a community dedicated to fostering
The development of lifelong critical and creative thinkers

Arbor Heights' School Communicator

arborheights.wikispaces.com/Principals+Corner

May 17, 2012

Dear Arbor Heights Families:

Bitter sweet news - Our long time educational leader and friend, Mr. Mark Ahlness has chosen to retire at the end of this year. Mr. Ahlness served students as a third grade teacher here at Arbor Heights for the past 21 years. Mr. Ahlness is truly an outstanding leader, teacher and colleague.



Mr. Ahlness' legacy is long and I would like to take this opportunity to share just a few of the many highlights of his distinguished career.

Mr. Ahlness began his career as a special education teacher and behavior specialist. Joining the Arbor Heights team in 1991, Mr. Ahlness established the Earth Day Groceries Project as a commemorative Earth Day experience for our students and our community. In addition to the project Mr. Ahlness creates a website focused on the, Earth Day Groceries Project, student art and writing. Through the project's 501c3 non-profit status, funds were raised to provide thousands of dollars to Arbor Heights for technology improvements. www.earthdaybags.org.

In 1994, Mr. Ahlness established the Arbor Heights' website—at the time, just one of nine elementary schools in the world with a website <http://www.halcyon.com/arborhts/history.html>. Because of the website's presence, Arbor Heights' students and staff signatures were aboard the Space Shuttle Atlantis (STS—86) as a part of the first Student Signatures in Space. <https://www.spaceday.org/index.php?About-Sub2.html>

The Junior Seahawk Newsletter also began in 1994 and is noteworthy as, “The oldest continuously published elementary school student newspaper on the Internet.”- <http://jrseahawk.com>

Mr. Ahlness inspirational teaching extended to his students and their global peers through the Room 12 Blog <http://roomtwelve.com>. The Room 12 Blog allows his students to share their writing and receive instant feedback with peers across the United States and beyond.

Students are able to create their blog pieces at home using the procured and donated XO Laptops. XO Lending library at Arbor heights: [http://www.ahlness.com/search?q=leanidng library](http://www.ahlness.com/search?q=leanidng+library)

The Arbor Heights community will forever be indebted to Mr. Ahlness for his work to launch our WIKI site, <http://arborheights.wikispaces.com>.

Mr. Ahlness has been an inspiration to all of us! I regret I didn't have more time to work with such a capable and experienced leader. We wish him the very best in his retirement and thank him for all he has given to the students, staff, parents and Arbor Heights community!

School Board meetings to start at 4:15 p.m.; public testimony at 5 p.m.

Board adjusts meeting time starting June 6

At the School Board's Executive Committee meeting in April, the committee decided to start the regular Board meetings earlier to prevent meetings from running late into the evening.

Beginning on June 6, Board meetings will start at 4:15 p.m. Public testimony will begin at 5 p.m., before the Board hears from staff on introduction and action items on the agenda. Board members believe that the 5 p.m. public testimony start time still allows the public to meaningfully engage with the Board.

The Board will monitor how the meetings proceed for the next few months and revisit the decision in the fall. If the 5 p.m. start time for public testimony does not allow for family members and community members to testify, the Board will revisit the issue and make any necessary changes.

Board meetings are held the first and third Wednesdays of every month. Families, staff and the community can come in person to the meeting at the John Stanford Center, 2445 3rd Ave. South, or view the meetings streamed live on SPS-TV <mms://mediaserver.seattleschools.org/live> or on Comcast Cable Channel 26. For more information on viewing options, visit <http://bit.ly/SPSboardmeetings>

The Board also accepts written public testimony if someone cannot attend the Board meeting. Testimony and feedback can be sent to SchoolBoard@seattleschools.org. For rules on testifying at a Board meeting, visit <http://bit.ly/SPSpublictestimony>.

The School Board's Executive Committee also recently released its Board meeting calendar for the 2012-13 school year: <http://bit.ly/SPSBoardCalendar>

For more information, please contact the School Board office at: schoolboard@seattleschools.org or (206) 252-0040



Wishing Elementary Instrumental Music Teacher, Wishing Elementary Instrumental Music Teacher, Mr. Daniel Hershman-Rossi, "Goodbye & Best Wishes!"

After two years as an Elementary Instrumental Music instructor, Mr. Rossi will leave the wonderful program he fostered here and at five other SW Seattle schools for an exciting experience in Illinois.

Mr. Rossi will long be admired for his dedication to our strings and band students in fourth grade and fifth grades. His patience, high expectations and talent will live long in the hearts and fingers of all who were touched by his gifts. In addition to Mr. Rossi's EIM program, he was a conductor with the West Seattle Community Orchestra (working with current and past AH students. He leaves the Northwest this summer to travel with his wife to Chicago Medical School at Rosalind Franklin University in Illinois. We wish them the very best as they begin a new chapter in their lives! Thank you, Mr. Rossi!

MAY

May 17

~PTA General Meeting 6:30pm

May 24

~Spring Concert

Day Concert 1:30-2:30pm

Evening Concert 6:30-7:30pm

May 28

~Memorial Day Holiday, NO
SCHOOL

May 29~Jun 1

~5th Grade Outdoor EducationJUNE

June 2

~Carnival 3:00-6:00pm

June 5

~Volunteer Recognition

Luncheon 11:30-1:00pm

~PTA Board Meeting 7:00pm

June 7

~Field Day

June 15

~3rd&4th Grade Pool Party

12:00-3:00pm

June 20

~Kindergarten Graduation

10:45-11:45am

~5th Grade Graduation 1:30pm

June 22

~Awards Assembly 1:00pm

~ Last Day of School,
Early Dismissal 2:00pm

~From the PTA~

~**Edible Plant Sale order deadline extended to Friday, May 18th.**

There is still time to place your order for veggies, herbs and berries.

The plants are being grown by locally owned Cascadian Edible Landscapes, LLC (eatyouryard.com) with delivery June 2nd at Arbor Heights (Carnival Day). More order forms are available in the office or arborheights.wikispaces.comAHPTA+Edible+Plant+Sale. Arbor Heights will receive up to 50% of the proceeds of the sale.

~**Volunteers are still need for Arbor Heights annual Carnival** on Saturday, June 2nd! Here are some ways you can contribute:

1) Pick a 1.5 hour shift to work a game or ride:

- 3:00-4:30pm or 4:30-6pm

2) Help with set-up or clean-up:

- Set-up: 12:00-3:00pm
- Clean-up: 6:00-8:00pm

3) Bake cupcakes for the Cupcake Walk

Please contact Dana Varon at dana.varon@comcast.net to sign-up!

~**Field Day (June 7th) Volunteers Needed!** Are you able to help staff a game station? We need to fill 23 volunteer slots: 10 in the morning session K-2, 10 for afternoon session grades 3-5, and 2-3 people to help with the BBQ lunch. Help with set-up is also needed. Contact Barb Glascock, bburke206@aol.com.

~A HUGE thank you to everyone who contributed desserts and breakfast treats for **Teacher/Staff Appreciation Week**.

A heartfelt thank you to Brian Papenfuss and Jessica Scheibach for providing the staff with a homemade gourmet breakfast!

You ALL helped make this week a huge success and most importantly, let the staff know that they are appreciated!

LAST PTA General Meeting of the Year Tonight!

Join us tonight at 6:30pm in the AH Cafeteria (Childcare provided by YMCA)

We will be voting on the PTA Budget for next school year.



Spring is Here! It is time for DRESS CODE Reminders

Arbor Heights' students are expected to display personal cleanliness, neatness, and appropriate attire at all times. The wearing of obscene or offending apparel is not appropriate. Consistent with the Seattle Public Schools drug and alcohol prevention program, we discourage students from wearing clothing that promotes these types of products. Students will be asked to change into appropriate attire. Shoes must be worn at all times for health and safety reasons. In appropriate clothing includes: bare midriff or spaghetti straps t-shirts, pants that are too baggy or low, wallet chains, shirts that have objectionable graphics, revealing or too tight and footwear that could be considered unsafe.

The fingertip rule will apply to the wearing of shorts and skirts. Length cannot be above fingertips when hands are held at side. This length allows modesty to exist throughout the student's day.

When buying tops for school, the straps should be at least two fingers wide. This width keeps undergarments covered. Kids grow during the year and are often caught off-guard when tops that were long enough in the fall are too short in the spring. Tops need to cover the midriff during the entire day which includes various physical activities.

Elementary Instrumental Music & Seattle Youth Symphony Orchestra in the Schools program is a good example of how a community partner can not only deliver a service but help our school and district increase capacity for arts education by bolstering program enrollment. As stated in video link, the SYSO in the Schools elementary program is leading to a three-fold increase in middle school orchestra enrollment, and hopefully the eventual creation of a robust high school orchestra for the Southwest Seattle community.

Thanks for your support of Elementary Instrumental Music and the SYSO in the Schools program

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=b5PIwrggpJE>

Hats, bandanas, etc. may be worn to and from school: however, they are not permitted during instructional time.

Lastly, please remember to label articles of clothing with your child's name. We have many unlabeled coats and jackets in our Lost & Found. Please check the hanging rack when you visit the school for any missing items--all remaining clothing items will be donated to charity after June 22.

"Appreciation is a wonderful thing: it makes what is excellent in others belong to us as well."

-Voltaire

Nominations for the “Golden Acorn” and the “Outstanding Educator” Awards

Each year, a parent volunteer is selected to win the annual Golden Acorn Award. In addition, a teacher is selected to win the annual Outstanding Educator Award. Nominees are selected for going above and beyond the call of duty. Winners will be announced at the Volunteer Luncheon and their names will be added to the two plaques in the School Lobby.

Please return your nominations to the Arbor Heights Office by



Golden Acorn Award

The Golden Acorn is offered by the Washington State PTA for recognition of a volunteer who has given outstanding service to all children in the school community... not just an individual who has donated time to help in his/her child's class or a staff member who is doing a good job. It is to recognize volunteer service “above and beyond” a particular job description.

I recommend that _____ (Parent Volunteer / Staff Member) be considered for a Golden Acorn Award for the following reasons:



Outstanding Educator Award

The Outstanding Educator Award is offered by the Washington State PTA to recognize individuals who go beyond the normal expectations of their jobs to make the learning environment fun, beneficial, and challenging.

I recommend that _____ (Teacher or other staff) be considered for an Outstanding Educator Award for the following reasons:

Volunteering: Why I Volunteer

by Jennifer McNeely, Steering Committee, AH Disaster Preparedness Grant 2012 & 1st Grade Parent

Volunteering at Arbor Heights started out of an interest and a need. When I first met up with Meri Patton about the grant she was writing, I was immediately interested. It was right up my alley! I have an interest in emergency preparedness and there was definitely a need to get this grant and get AH prepared. It was a perfect match.

Something else happened, however. I noticed that going to the meetings, planning, and connecting with other AH parents was fulfilling in a way that I did not expect. I came to see that by volunteering, it was serving not only AH and my kids, but myself as well.

Through my volunteering, I have been able to brush up on my communication skills, network with new people and learn more about my community: skills that just about everyone can use! Think of volunteering as a way to boost your resume, learn about something that you've always been interested in, network, and make new friends. OH, AND help out the school, and your community.

Meri Patton spearheaded the efforts to write a grant for the Emergency Preparedness of Arbor Heights. The grant has been awarded from the Seattle City Neighborhood Grants! AH now has the funds to develop and implement the long term plans for Emergency Preparedness. Grant items include supplies, training and a community Outreach Event focused on community preparedness and hosted by Arbor Heights. This is an exciting time to be a part of the team of volunteers at Arbor Heights. Please look over the look over the positions below and see if anything speaks to you. Many hands make short work!

Limited Engagement: AH Emergency Preparedness GRANT POSITIONS:

- 1) Outreach Committee: 1 AH Co-Chair Needed (Additional volunteers will be requested as needed)
- 2) Administrative Committee: 1 Person Needed
- 3) Outcomes Committee: 1 Person Needed
- 4) Event Committee: 1 Chair Position Needed

For a more detailed description of each of these committee positions and to learn more including skill sets and time commitments visit arborheights.wikispaces.com/Emergency+Preparedness or contact Meri and the Steering Committee at : Meri_patton@yahoo.com